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THE HUDSON RIVER.

I.

THE worst part of a voyage up the Hudson is the trouble of getting to the boats. As you turn down one of the streets running from Broadway to the river, you wonder if there is another great city in the world where so little respect is paid

to the rights of pedestrians. Time and again you are forced from the sidewalk into the perilous roadway by the loads of merchandise which noisy cartmen are transferring from the vehicles to the stores. Vicious horses bite at your elbows, and their drivers maliciously grin at your startled appearance. Barrels of flour are unkindly rolled against your broadcloth and your shins. Avoid-

ing one obstruction you

breeze of the sea fanning your heated brow, and see the multifarious life of the harbour under the haze of a golden summer morning.

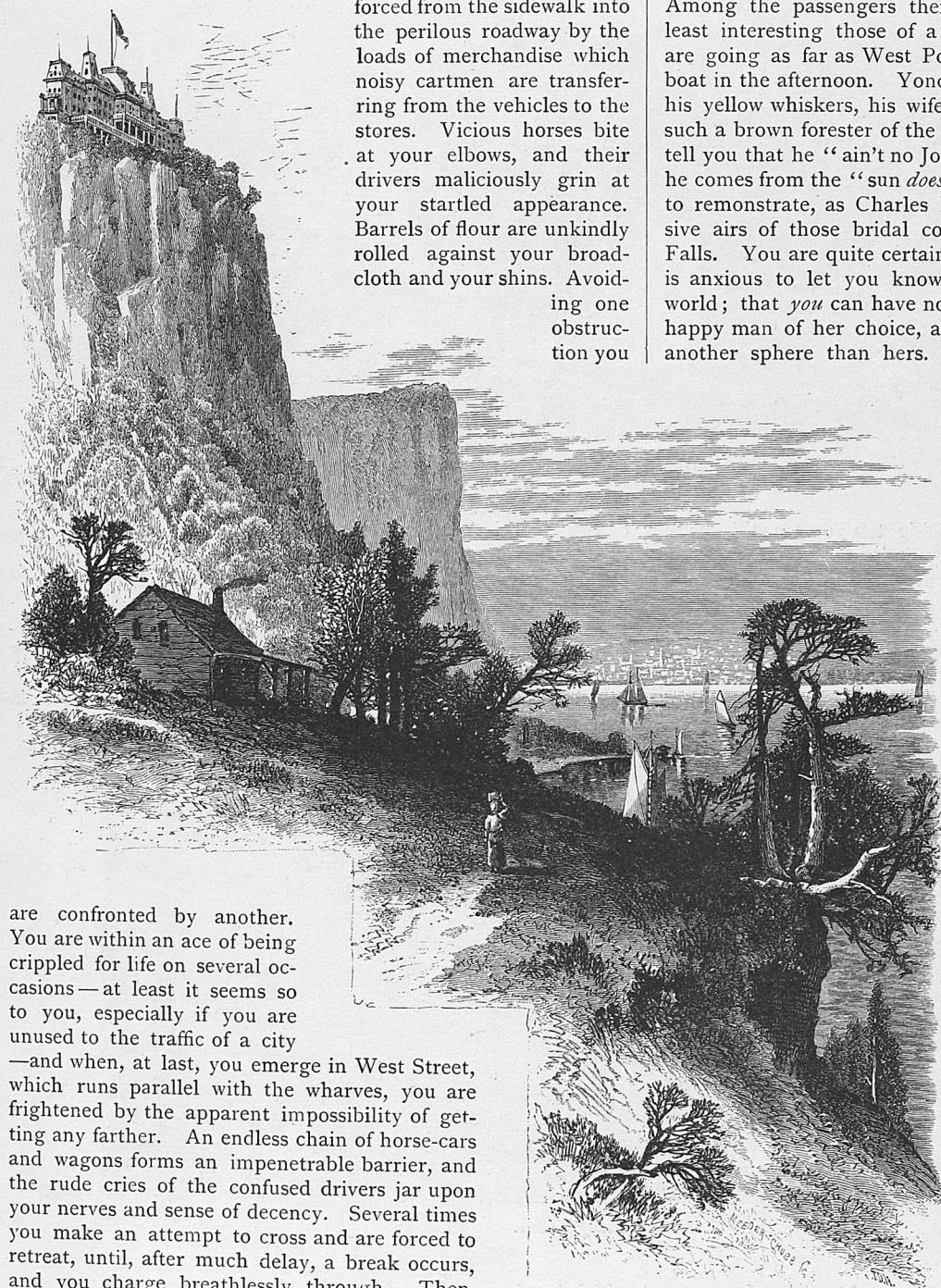
Forgetful of time, careless of the people who surround you, entranced in ease, you are not disturbed until the bell sounds an adieu to the shore, and the pulse of the steamer begins to throb. Among the passengers there are many familiar faces, not the least interesting those of a bevy of boarding-school girls, who are going as far as West Point, and will return by the "down" boat in the afternoon. Yonder is a red-faced Englishman, with his yellow whiskers, his wife, and a guide-book. There, too, is such a brown forester of the West as Dickens described, who will tell you that he "ain't no Johnny-cake, he ain't," and that where he comes from the "sun *does* shine—a little!" You feel inclined to remonstrate, as Charles Lamb remonstrated, with the excessive airs of those bridal couples who are on their way to the Falls. You are quite certain that the dimpled girl in lavender is anxious to let you know that *her* lot is disposed of in this world; that *you* can have no hopes of her; that you are not the happy man of her choice, and that you are out in the cold of another sphere than hers. These things should be taken for

granted, as the gentle essayist says, and you are annoyed and inclined to be cynical at the exhibition of them. That tall young cadet, with the refined, hopeful face, who is talking with the delicate lady in black silk, is the most interesting person on board, you think, and the boarding-school girls are evidently of the same opinion.

The boat describes a semicircle as she turns up the river, and the spray leaps as high as her bow. There is a rush of people aft in search of chairs and camp-stools, and the forward deck is soon crowded with expectant faces. The only ones who pretend not to be interested are those who live up the river, to whom the scenery is an every-day thing. The others are absorbed in every passing object, constantly diving into their guide-books, or listening to the talkative old gentleman who is familiar with all the scenes.

You are surprised how long New York City lasts in your progress. You pass on the New Jersey side the towns of Hoboken, Weehawken, and Fort Lee, while on the New York side there are Manhattanville, Carmansville, and Fort Washington, suburbs of the city. Hoboken is a thriving city with a large German element, partly built on a

high bluff forming a continuation of the Palisades. It is nearly opposite the steamer's starting-point, and is scarcely distinguishable from Jersey City, which is a mile or two nearer the bay. The Elysian Fields, once a beautiful park, but now

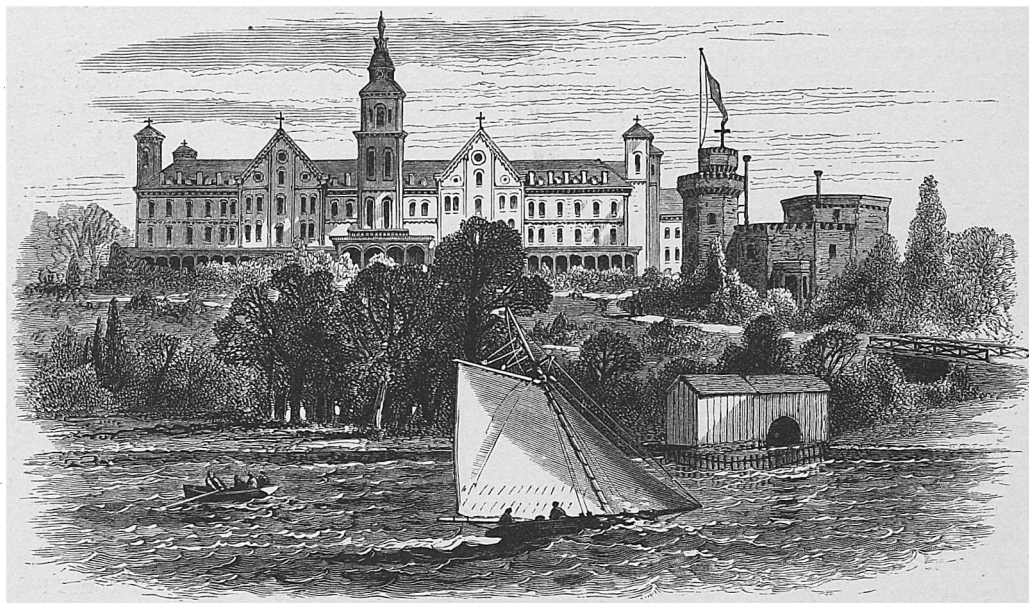


Palisade Mountain-House.

are confronted by another. You are within an ace of being crippled for life on several occasions—at least it seems so to you, especially if you are unused to the traffic of a city—and when, at last, you emerge in West Street, which runs parallel with the wharves, you are frightened by the apparent impossibility of getting any farther. An endless chain of horse-cars and wagons forms an impenetrable barrier, and the rude cries of the confused drivers jar upon your nerves and sense of decency. Several times you make an attempt to cross and are forced to retreat, until, after much delay, a break occurs, and you charge breathlessly through. Then, thank Heaven! you are safe, and you find the steamer without further difficulty. The cigar smoked in the quiet of the evening after a hard day's work; sunshine after storm; convalescence after illness; a week's rest in the country after a year's labour in the city—the solace of these blessings is unequal to that you derive, as, located on the forward deck of the steamer, you feel the cool

rural in name only, separate it from Weehawken, where Aaron Burr mortally shot Alexander Hamilton in a duel. The aspect of the city changes every few minutes. At first there are the wharves, crowded with shipping and resonant with traffic, with a wilderness of far-extending roofs. A little farther up there are many waste lots of unoccupied land, and an isolated ship is occasionally seen loading with petroleum. Some garbage-hulks and canal-boats creak at their moorings near a ruinous jetty.

Then there is a patch of grass and a shanty village; then a few detached frame-houses. The signs of business decrease each moment, and at last the bank is green and wooded, with many pleasant villas looking down upon the water. You think you have escaped the city, but you have only reached Manhattanville. Near the shore there is a princely house which was occupied at different times by the English Earl of Devon and Joseph Bonaparte. At Carmansville stands the old home of Audubon,

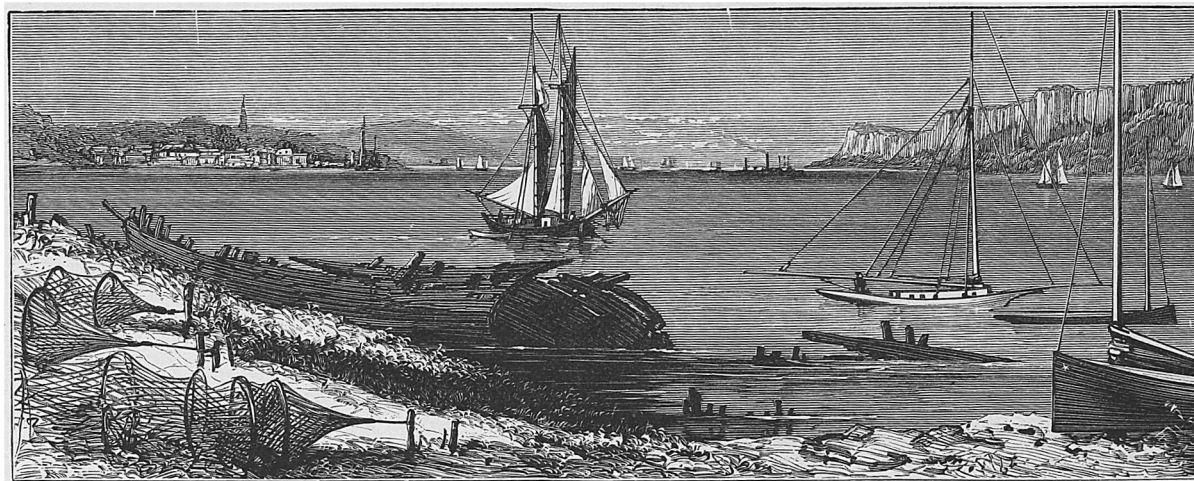


Mount St. Vincent.

the great naturalist, and at Fort Washington you are still within the limits of the city. But the scene no longer reminds you of its turmoil and heat. These white houses with their picturesque roofs are the homes to which our citizens retreat after their daily battle in the city. The art of the gardener has been well employed in cultivating the precious lands. There is scarcely an unweeded acre or an untasteful building. Year after year wealth and care have been expended in converting the New York bank

of the river into a paradise, prettier, to our mind, than Richmond or Kew on the English Thames.

The bank on the New Jersey side offers an extraordinary contrast to the sylvan smoothness of this landscape. After struggling to assert themselves in the bluff at Hoboken, the Palisades, opposite Fort Washington, assume the abrupt form which they retain almost throughout their whole length. For over thirty miles they soar precipitously from the edge of the water to a



Above Yonkers, looking South.

height of from 300 to 600 feet. Several bluffs in the range exceed 400 feet, and the most elevated of all is 660 feet above the level. The latter is nearly opposite Sing Sing, and it juts into the river like an enormous buttress. The Dutch named it Verdrietigh-Hoeck—Grievous or Vexatious Point—because in navigating the river they were apt to meet adverse winds at this point. The face of the ridge has been scarred by the action of the elements and age. At its feet there is a mass of loose rock,

which has been falling for centuries, and is accumulating even now. Among this *debris*, and in the seams, a few hardy trees find a precarious hold, and struggle in vain to cover the nakedness of the iron-bound slope.

The upper edge of the majestic formation gently inclines towards a magnificently fertile valley, settled with pretty villages. Not many hundred yards from the brink there are clusters of cottages, which command a superb view of Long Island,

the Sound, the city, and the river. More than this, at the very brink itself, there is a large summer hotel, with innumerable spires, towers, and porticoes—a striking adjunct to the picturesque of the scenery. The foliage is more lavish here than at other points, and a grassy bank lies at the foot of the precipice. But, only a short distance farther up, a majestic rock of unbroken height projects frowningly with extreme abruptness, throwing its shadow nearly half-way across the stream. From one of the porticoes a glimpse is obtained of the flourishing town of Yonkers.

Twelve miles above the city proper, the Spuyten Duyvil Creek breaks through the New York bank, and connecting the Harlem River with the Hudson it forms the boundary of Manhattan Island. The double track of the railway courses it on piles, and there are two or three large factories near by which will enable the tourist to recognise it. You all know the legend of how it came by its name. Anthony Van Corlear, the trumpeter of Governor Stuyvesant, lost his life in attempting to swim across it during a violent storm. "The wind was high, the elements in an uproar, and no Charon could be found to ferry the adventurous sounder of brass across the water. For a short time he vapoured like an intelligent ghost upon the brink, and then, bethinking himself of the urgency of his errand (to arouse the people to arms), he took a hearty embrace of his stone bottle, swore most valourously that he would swim across in spite of the devil (*en spyt der duyvel*), and daringly plunged into the stream. Luckless Anthony! Scarcely had he buffeted half-way over, when he was observed to struggle violently, as if battling with the spirit of the waters. Instinctively he put his trumpet to his mouth, and, giving a vehement blast, sank for ever to the bottom!"

During the War for Independence, says Lossing, in his admirable "Book of the Hudson," many strange events occurred in the vicinity of the creek. Batteries were erected on the promontories on each side of it, and many skirmishes took place between Cow-Boys and Skinners, Whigs and Tories, British, Hessians, and Indians. Two miles farther up the river you come to Riverdale, which is notable for the many beautiful residences on its slopes. Indeed, between Fort Washington and Tarrytown, there is a constant succession of country villas, in which marble, wood, and brick, have been employed with very charming results. They may not be all that a severely classic architect might wish for, but they appear elegant and picturesque as seen at a distance on the river. The railroad skirts the bank, and fast trains often overtake the steamer. There are many cosy little stations, and on a summer's evening crowds of carriages, with liveried coachmen, may be seen awaiting the arrival of their wealthy owners from the city.

Near Riverdale you will observe on a hill the extensive brick building of Mount St. Vincent, a Roman Catholic academy for girls. In the same grounds there is a curious-looking blue-granite, castellated house called Font Hill, which was built and occupied for some time by Edwin Forrest. Here the tragedian

brought his bride and spent some of the happiest days in his troubled life. After the separation, however, he sold it to the Sisters of the Academy, as its pleasures and uses for him had departed.

Yonkers is quite an important town, although very like a fashionable suburb in its characteristics. The name is derived from the Dutch *Yonkheer*—young master or lord—the common appellation for the heir of a Dutch family. The broad streets are lined with handsome houses of modern date, and innumerable cupolas, towers, and Mansard roofs, are presented to the observation of the tourist on board the steamer. The chief at-



Palisade Cascade.

traction for the antiquary is the Philipse Manor Hall, the older part of which was erected in 1682. The present front, forming an addition, was erected in 1745. The rooms are large and wainscoted, with

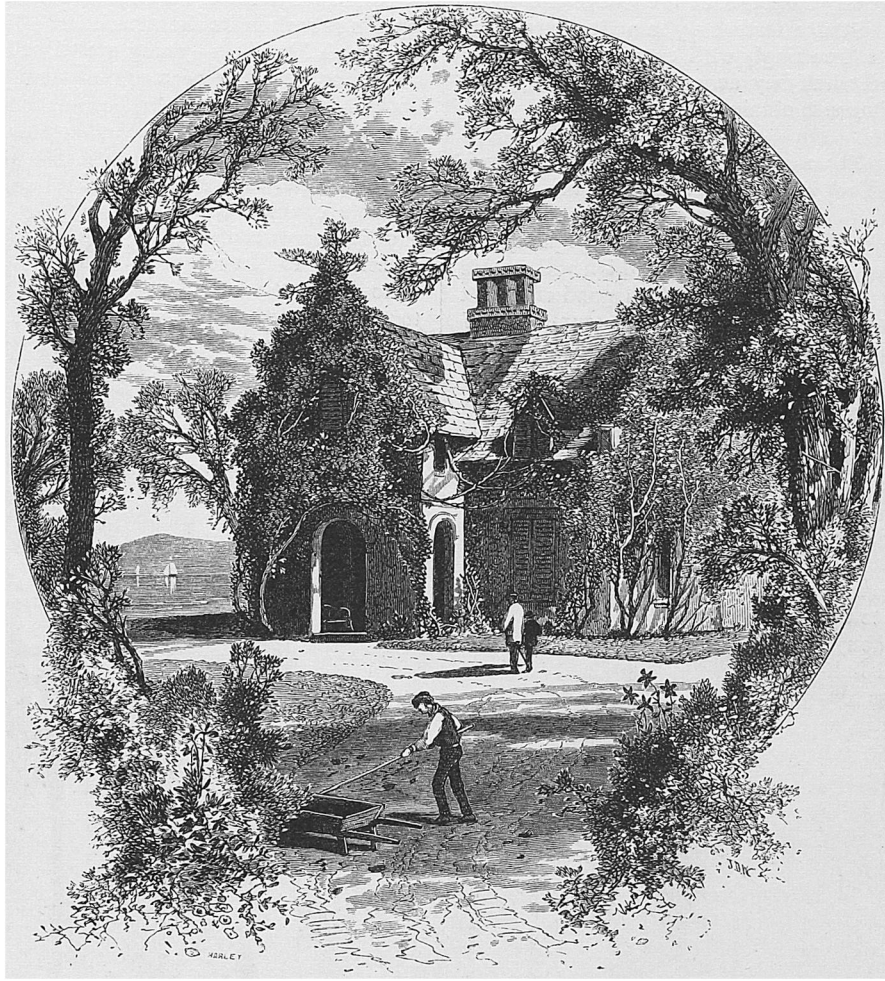
lofty ceilings. The principal one has some elaborate ornamental work in high relief. Some of the fireplaces are surrounded with borders of ancient Dutch tiles, and in the grounds there is a well with a subterranean passage leading from it, nobody knows to where. It was the home of Washington's first love, Mary Philipse.

Twenty-one miles from New York is the historic town of Hastings. It was here that a British force of 6,000 men under Lord Cornwallis crossed the river to the opposite shore, whence they advanced in an attack on the Americans under Washington at Fort Lee, and pursued them across New Jersey to the Delaware River. Here occurred the first

meeting between Arnold and André. The river now begins to extend into a bay or lake, nearly four miles wide, called Tappan Zee. Nearly opposite Dobbs' Ferry a pretty cascade tumbles down in a snowy sheet from the upper edge, and falling on the bank below rushes towards the river in a narrow channel. Dobbs' Ferry is the next town above Hastings, on the eastern bank, and 22 miles from New York. The Indian name was *Weec-ques-guck*, signifying Place of the Bark Kettle. Its present name is from Dobbs, a Swede from the Delaware, one of

the earliest settlers on the Philipse's Manor. It is pleasantly situated in front of the Greenburg Hills, and was the scene of active military operations during the War for Independence.

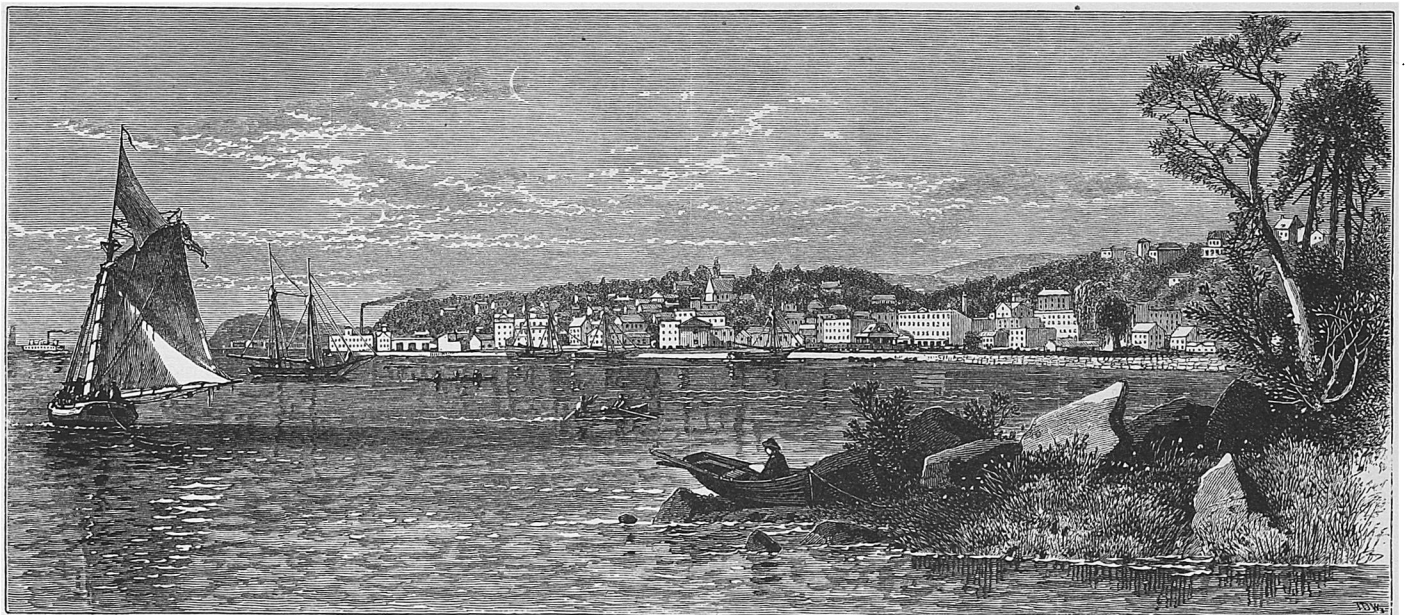
Passing Dobbs' Ferry you next reach Piermont, the natural termination of the Palisades, 24 miles from New York, on the western shore. Two miles back of Piermont is Tappan, where



Sunnyside.

on October 2, 1780, Major André was tried, condemned, and executed. Nearly opposite, on the eastern shore, is Irvington, famous as the residence of the late Washington Irving, whose

vine-covered villa, "Sunnyside," is the Mecca of many pilgrims. Above Irvington we reach Tarrytown, noted for its many beautiful villas.



Tarrytown.